Sexual orientation discrimination

Sexual orientation discrimination (also often referred to as **sexualism**) is discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or sexual behaviour.

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Sexual bias

Sexual orientation discrimination is discrimination against a person or group on the basis of their sexual orientation or sexual behavior. Sexual orientation discrimination often comes up in the context of employment actions.[1] It usually refers to a predisposition towards heterosexual people, which is biased against lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, among others. It can, however, also be against heterosexual people. A related term is *sexual prejudice*, a negative attitude toward someone because of her or his sexual orientation.[2] This bias is not the same as homophobia, but rather is the discrimination towards or against certain sexual orientations. Heterosexism suggests that the basis for this bias is not found in the individual per se but rather has a broader cultural or biological basis that results in attitudes weighted in favour of heterosexuality over other sexual orientations. Heterosexism is one form of structural violence.

An earlier definition of this term is: Sexual orientation discrimination is a belief or argument that one sexual orientation or sexual behaviour is inherently superior to some or all others. Usually it comes in the form of heterosexuality being considered the only natural, normal, or moral mode of sexual behavior, and is also used to refer to the effects of that instinct. The word *heterosexism* has also been proposed to mean essentially the same thing as this form of sexual orientation discrimination.[3] This word has been suggested as an alternative to homophobia,[4] in part because it uses a parallel structure to sexism or racism. The intent of heterosexism is the examination of the cultural bias against non-heterosexuals rather than individual bias, which is the focus of homophobia, as well as the adverse effects of normative heterosexuality on heterosexual identifying people.[5]

In queer theory, heterosexism is closely related to heteronormativity.

Sexuality or sexual nature

The term pansexualism, seen especially in the field of early-20th-century psychoanalysis,[6] was based on this usage. The terms homosexualism and bisexualism were also based on this usage, and were commonly used before the general adoption of the terms homosexuality and bisexuality.[7][8]

See also

- Antisexualism
- Discrimination against asexual people
- Heteronormativity
- Heterosexism

- Homophobia
- Sexism
- Sexualization
- Transphobia

Notes

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This page was last edited on 15 January 2019, at 02:49 (UTC).

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